

# HJM CACHETS on UNMANNED SATELLITE COVERS

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Some cover manufacturers nicely identify their covers with names or logos. Such is the case with HJM-designed cachets, most of which appear to have a similar border design as well as a lower-case "hjm" logo in the lower right, which clearly identifies them. The authors of this article have compiled a list of HJM covers, which are attributed to **Hans J. Mueller** of Flushing NY. Because details associated with that name are few, readers are encouraged to supply additional covers or any information they may have about this cover manufacturer.

What little is known about Mueller was found in a USCS (Universal Ship Cancellation Society) catalog which lists Mueller as a cachet maker: "Cover sponsor/printers, 1964 – 1965. Designed bordered envelopes which he had printed for his personal use and that of friends (non-commercial). The first design was a general-purpose space envelope, the second an envelope titled "United States Nuclear Submarine Mail". Mueller serviced 2 to 5 of his covers for space and nuclear submarine events until 1975. Both designs were identified with initials 'hjm'." This text implies that very few HJM covers were produced. However, the authors have found at least 40 HJM covers for space-related events with cancels from 1965 to 1969.

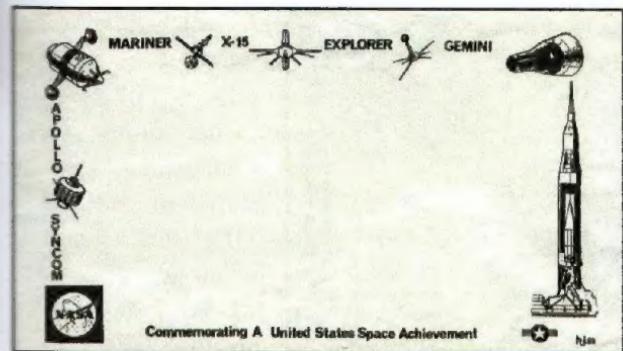
This article explains why the

authors are particularly interested in HJM cachets and presents a few examples of HJM covers. While most of them are for un-manned satellite events, which is the authors' primary interest, others are for rocket launches and manned missions. HJM covers have been found for satellite launches or events from the latter half of the 1960s, except for one from 1974. From this set of known covers, we speculate that HJM largely stopped following space events in 1969.

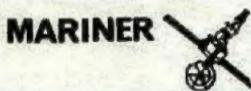
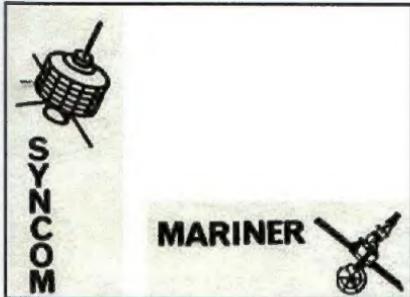
## Why are HJM covers of interest to the authors?

The authors' main interest in HJM covers is in the generic outer border that appears on all HJM space-related cachets. This outer border has been found in three colors: black (as shown), blue, and blue-green. Examples of covers with all three colors are found below. Black is by far the most common color for this border, with only about 20% of the borders found in the other two colors. Within this outer border, in the central blank space, is at minimum a text description or a rubber-stamp cachet related to the specific satellite launch or event of interest, as will be seen in the examples that follow.

The main interest in this HJM border is that it contains three un-manned satellites for which the authors collect covers. Even



though this border may be used for events which are not related to un-manned satellites, the authors gather all such incidental examples of these three satellites on covers. The satellites specifically depicted on the HJM border and described in text are: "Syncom" (at left in the border), "Mariner" (at upper-left), and "Explorer" (at upper-middle). Cropped detail images of these three satellites are provided. For Syncom, since all three of the Syncom series were similar, the image represents any of the three. For Mariner, the image is similar to Mariner-1 or 2 (later Mariners were different). For Explorer, the image is Explorer-10 specifically (other numbered Explorers have different designs).



It's interesting that no-HJM covers have been found for the launch of either Syncom or Mariner, and only

two covers for the Explorer series, both of which came after Explorer-10. The three satellites in the border were all launched in the early 1960s, before the first HJM cover was produced in 1965.

Besides these three un-manned satellites, the other border elements are related to manned missions, which are not in the authors' primary area of interest. The design of these HJM space-related cachets also has a small NASA "meatball" logo in the lower left, a United States Air Force logo at the lower right, and the text "Commemorating a United States Space Achievement" across the bottom.

#### A few examples of HJM covers for satellite-related events

Some examples of HJM cachet covers are presented in this section. Each has an added cachet in the otherwise blank center to identify the launch or event. The simplest such added content consists of black or red typed text, or a rubber-stamp cachet. Some of these rubber-stamp cachets have been found alone on covers for similar missions.

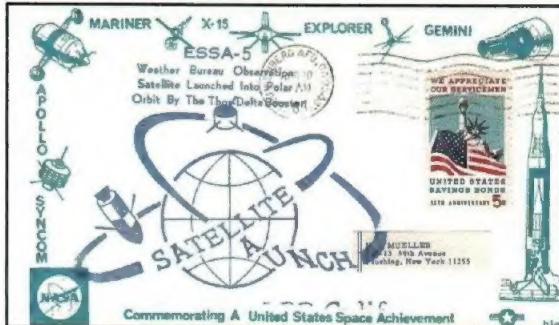
The first example contains a black rubber-stamp cachet in the left-center. This cachet may be a Robert Boudwin design, used for a sub-orbital ARCAS (All-purpose Rocket for Collecting Atmospheric Soundings) rocket launch from 18



May 1965. The rocket launch and White Sands Missile Range NM cancel are unusual for HJM covers, as most HJM covers were produced for satellite launches and usually have a Cape Canaveral FL cancel. The HJM border information is not at all related to the launch, but is of interest to the authors, as outlined above.



The next example is one of the first HJM covers with a blue border, the second color found among the known HJM cachets. This cover was produced for the failed multiple-satellite launch of GCTS-2 (Gravity Gradient Test Satellite-2) and IDCSP-8/14 (Initial Defense Communications Satellite Program-8 thru 14) on 26



for the three satellites depicted in the border, the same ones found on all HJM

August 1966. The Swanson-design purple rubber-stamp cachet contains basic information for the launch on this date.

The next example is launch cover with an HJM blue-green border, the third color found among the known HJM cachets. This cover was produced for the launch of the weather satellite ESSA-5 (Environmental Science Services Administration-5) from Cape Canaveral on 20 April 1967. The blue rubber-stamp cachet is thought to be a Vandy/DuBeau design, which can be found by itself on similar launch covers.

Finally, the last HJM example is a Skylab-4 end-of-mission cover from 8 February 1974. Skylab is represented by the blue rubber-stamp cachet in the center-left. Again, this cover is mainly of interest

space-related covers. Chronologically, this is the last HJM cover known to us, and the only one from the 1970s. It is possible that HJM covers ceased production in 1974.



### HJM covers for submarine-related events

After many years of collecting HJM space-related cachets, all of which were of the common border design presented above, the authors came across an HJM cover from the Naval Cover Museum website ([https://www.navalcovermuseum.org/wiki/Cachet\\_Maker\\_Hans\\_J\\_Mueller](https://www.navalcovermuseum.org/wiki/Cachet_Maker_Hans_J_Mueller)). This is one of only two HJM submarine-related covers known to the authors. The other one (which can be seen on the authors' website) was found as a black-and-white reproduction in a Naval Cover Cachet Makers Catalog (compiled and edited by R.D. Rawlins, USCS #5490, copyright 1988).

The HJM border on the submarine-related cover below is dark blue with the words "United States Nuclear

Submarine Mail" across the top, a submarine depiction across the bottom, and a submarine missile launch on the left-hand side. On the right-hand side are the "SSN" and "SSBN" acronyms. SSN is the designation for a nuclear-powered submarine: Ship, Submersible, Nuclear; SSBN designates a submarine that carries Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM). There probably exist a few more covers with this HJM submarine-type cachet, and while they are not in the realm of unmanned satellites, the authors would still like to learn more about such cachets from readers who may be familiar with them.



### Summary

The author's website for HJM cachets, with a list of all known covers, can be found online at <http://rammb.cira.colostate.edu/dev/hillger/hjm.htm>. The links in the last column of the online table point to other web pages where covers related

to the same missions are found. Entries highlighted in blue or green are for covers that are not for unmanned satellites (blue for various types of manned missions, and green for submarine covers).

### Biographical notes

The authors have researched and written extensively on the subjects of weather, climate, and un-manned satellites on stamps and covers, as well as other topics. The authors' Un-manned Satellite Philately site can be found at <http://rammb.cira.colostate.edu/dev/hillger/satellites.htm>. For a complete list and electronic reproductions of their publications, see <http://rammb.cira>.

[colostate.edu/dev/hillger/stamp-articles.htm](http://colostate.edu/dev/hillger/stamp-articles.htm). Email correspondence with the authors is welcomed, using the addresses below.

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## IS THIS A SPACE COVER?

This certainly LOOKS like a space cover – an envelope with space stamps and a Project Mercury cachet printed on the envelope by the Big Lick Stamp Club honoring the 50th Anniversary of John Glenn's orbital flight. The stamps are cancelled with a pictorial postmark. Or are they?

There are three specific requirements for pictorial cancellations to have as part of the cancel itself. These requirements are listed as part of USPS Publication 186 - Pictorial Postmarks. The first requirement - City, state, and ZIP Code of the location for the temporary retail station - Roanoke, VA 24014 – check. The second requirement - Month, day, and year when your pictorial postmark is being offered – 09/15/2012 – check. The third requirement - Name of the temporary re-



tail station, including the word "Station" or the abbreviation "Sta." (for example, Hollywood Festival Station or Customer Appreciation Day Sta.). – the word "Station" nor "Sta." does not appear anywhere in the cancel so the third requirement was not met.

So, did the USPS authorize a cancel not meeting its own requirements (space cover) or did the Big Lick Stamp Club just make a rubber stamp and use it on the stamps (not a space cover)?